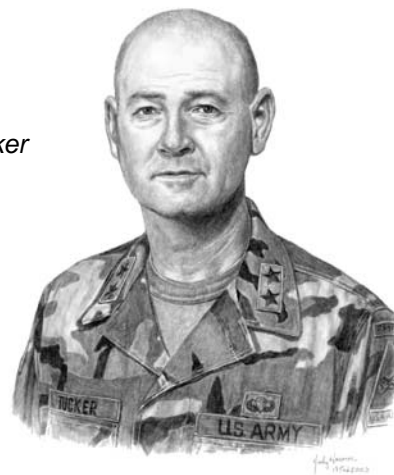


Major General Terry L. Tucker
Commanding General
U.S. Army Armor Center



Training Troopers, Tankers, and Leaders

ARMOR welcomes Major General Terry L. Tucker as the Commanding General, U.S. Army Armor Center, and bids a fond farewell to Major General Steve Whitcomb — God Speed.

It is a challenging time for the Armor Force, and I have no doubt that our plates will remain full as we continue to have more missions than time or resources can address. This kind of operating tempo requires a team effort to get it right as we move forward.

Major General Steve Whitcomb has done a great job balancing the competing missions and priorities here at your Home of Armor and Cavalry, and he has left our branch in good shape. I am honored to take over the reins as your 40th Chief of Armor, and I promise you we will continue to provide the Armor Force with the best support available. Clearly, one of the most important things that we must do in this area is to effectively train troopers, tankers, and leaders for our Army.

When I left Fort Knox as the Deputy Commanding General, Army Transformation to the Objective Force was just beginning to focus on brigade and below forces. Since then, Fort Knox has led TRADOC and the Army's effort to define the requirements for the Unit of Action, which is the brigade-sized element of the Objective Force. This mission is critical, and we will focus on it at this year's upcoming Armor Conference in May. Let me make it clear that this is important business, and leaders in the current force need to stay en-

gaged in how this Unit of Action is developing and the capabilities it will bring for our soldiers and leaders. At the same time, I acknowledge that the current force has plenty of challenges to keep Armor and Cavalry leaders engaged. We must balance the training needs of the current force with efforts to build the future Objective Force. That's the guidance that I have been given by our leaders, and it is my responsibility to make sure that the Armor Center gets this balance right.

The Armor Force must remain well trained and ready to fight and win our Nation's wars as part of a combined arms and joint force. At Fort Knox, the Armor Center trains troopers, tankers, and leaders from privates to colonels — over 20,000 a year, as a matter of fact. Our time, training dollars, and most importantly, the expertise of our training cadre will remain committed to this training mission that enables mission accomplishment for the Force.

We are resourcing more live training than ever, and we are one of the few branch schools that commits resources to enable our captains attending the Armor Captains Career Course and our senior NCOs attending ANCOC to conduct battle focused, multiechelon training in the field. We continue to improve on the Gauntlet multiechelon training methodology that enables captains to command companies, with our NCOs assigned as platoon sergeants and paired with our lieutenant platoon leaders from the Armor Officer Basic Course. Whether in a live training environment

or virtually in our close combat tactical trainers, these future leaders come from all over the force to train together at Fort Knox in an environment that improves tactical decisionmaking, and then return to the force, better able to accomplish their warfighting missions.

We are also committed to continually improve on tried-and-true tanker and trooper one station unit training (OSUT). We will dedicate the resources and time to ensure our cadre are certified technically and tactically proficient and we will stay engaged with the force to ensure that our instruction is effective and meets your needs. In the near future, we will extend the survey methods to the Force that we have used so successfully in OSUT to maintain and improve the effectiveness of our instruction.

The balance will always exist, and it will always be dynamic. With our three-pronged, life-long education model of institutional training, self-development training, and unit training, continuous dialogue is necessary to synchronize the effort at all levels of responsibility at brigade and below. It is my job to facilitate that dialogue and make necessary adjustments for the good of the force as we move forward.

To Major General and Cathy Whitcomb, thanks for all you have done for tankers, troopers, and families everywhere. Our force was in great hands for too short a time.

Forge the Thunderbolt!